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Sunday School Lesson

January 20, 1946

THE LAWS OF A PEOPLE

Lesson: Ex. 20:1-17

Golden Text: "I will delight myself in Thy Commandments, which I have loved." Psalm 119:47.

COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

Since last Sunday's lesson we have the children of Israel crossing the Red Sea, the giving of the manna, the gift of the water from the rock, the battle with the Amalekites, and organization of the nation by rulers. In our lesson today we study the ten commandments. They are often divided into what some call the first and second tables. The first table comprising the first four commandments contains our duty to God, the remaining six contain our duty to our neighbour. On these two hang all the law and the prophets.

1. **And God spake all these words**—In three ways: (1) By His voice; (2) by writing them on tables of stone; and (3) He has written them on the very nature of man.

2. **Thy God**.—His benevolence was to the individual and so the commandments were meant for the individual as well as for the nation.

3. **Thou shalt have no other gods before me**.—This is the first commandment and shews that God is desirous of our supreme affection. The heathen had many gods, but Israel is to have one only, the God who brought them out of Egypt and who alone is worthy of worship. The danger that Israel faced was following the example of the heathen who worshipped the creature rather than the Creator. Today many people regard self, money, honor, pleasure and friends ahead of God. This is idolatry.

4. **Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven images**.—Images misrepresent God. Anything that comes between us and the Spirit of God is a hindrance to spiritual worship. The Roman Catholic Church has removed this commandment in order to justify image worship. God is a jealous God and does not purpose to share our affections with idols.

7. **Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain**.—i. e. lightly, carelessly, thoughtlessly. It forbids (1) all trifling, careless use of God's name. (2) all irreverent use of the Bible, hymns, sacred things. (3) all irreverence, thoughtless laughing and talking in the house of God. (4) all such interjections as O God! My God! Good God! Good Heavens! etc.

8. **Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy**.—The Sabbath Day is a day of rest and worship. If God did not provide a stated time for worship the probability is that man would not take time. Works of mercy and necessity are alone justifiable. Man's body needs the rest, animals need the rest and so also does machinery. Above all else man's spirit nature needs communion and fellowship with his Maker.

12. Honour thy father and thy mother. "It is to treat with reverence and affection, because they are within the scope of their rule the representatives of God," Peloubet's select notes.

13. **Thou shalt not kill**.—"Do not murder." R. V. We are to regard sacredly the life of every man, woman and child. The legal pun-

ishment of murders is to this end. Our Saviour shewed that hatred is of the heart and he that cherishes the spirit that leads to murder has really, so far as himself is concerned committed murder.

14. **Thou shalt not commit adultery**.—The seventh commandment makes the family and the breaking of this commandment breaks the family. The spirit of the law forbids the spirit that leads to the breaking of this commandment. It is broken (1) by evil sensual thoughts. (2) Theatres, which arouse sensual feelings. (3) Dancing and drunkenness. (4) Looking at lewd pictures. (5) Reading impure literature.

15. **Thou shalt not steal**.—There are several ways a person may steal: (1) By taking what does not belong to them. (2) By taking advantage of another person's ignorance. (3) By escaping customs-house duties. (4) By giving too small wages to those we employ. (5) By giving false weight on goods bought or sold. (6) Business that injures the life and property of others as selling intoxicating liquors. (7) By removing your neighbors' landmarks.

16. **Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor**.—"This is a summons to hold in sacred regard the personal reputation or good name of every child of God." "It would be much better to steal your neighbor's purse than to steal his reputation by false witnessing.

17. **Thou shalt not covet**.—This commandment treats solely of the mind and heart. It strikes deeper than any other, the very root of sin. Covetousness is the result of discontent and has no place in the heart of a Christian.

QUESTIONS AND THEMES FOR DISCUSSION

1. Name the ten commandments.
2. Into what two divisions do the ten commandments naturally fall?
3. What effect do you think the war had on the keeping of the third and fourth commandments?
4. Is law essential to liberty? Discuss.
5. Distinguish between the spirit and the letter of the law. Shew how the former is essential to its fulfilment.

January 27, 1946

A PEOPLE AT WORSHIP

Lesson: Ex. 28:1-35; 4-9; 20-29

Golden Text: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

Matthew 4:10

COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

Since last Sunday's lesson we have further religious, civil and sanitary laws given to the people. God gives Moses directions concerning the tabernacle, its furniture, the altar and the consecration of priests. The people in the absence of Moses cause Aaron to make a calf. Moses prays for the people and they are forgiven. The Idolaters are slain.

1. **And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him**.—Aaron and his sons were called of God for their work of ministering in the priests' office. Some of the duties of the priests were: (1) To watch over the fire on the altar of burnt offerings, and keep it burning evermore. Lev. 6:12. (2) To offer the morning and evening sacrifice. (3) To teach the children of Israel the

statutes of the Lord.

5. **Whosoever is of a willing heart**.—The offerings for the tabernacle were voluntary. God loveth a cheerful giver. Gold, silver and brass. The offerings were such that both rich and poor could share the blessings in giving.

6. **And blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair**.—"Blue is the color of heaven, purple of royalty, scarlet the color of blood." A. C. Gaebelein. The fine linen suggests the purity of Christ and the goats' hair suggests his humility.

7. **And rams' skins died red, and badgers' skins**.—Are said to be a symbol of Christ's devotion and obedience to God, even unto the death of the cross. The badgers' skins are taken to mean his holy determination and steadfastness. Shittim wood.—"It is of all wood the most durable and is a type of the humanity of Christ."—A. C. Gaebelein.

8. **And oil for the light, and spices for anointing oil, and for the sweet incense**.—The anointing oil represented the dedication to God of the entire tabernacle. The consecration was to begin with the ark (Ex. 30:26-29) and proceeded outward taking in order the contents of the Most Holy Place, the Holy Place and the Court. Notes on the International S. S. Lessons. The whole tabernacle was to be anointed including even the grate of the altar. The oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit and the tabernacle is a type of our body. Thus our body in this gospel age becomes the dwelling of the Holy Spirit.

9. **And onyx stones, and stones to be set for the ephod, and for the breastplate**.—"The ephod, or waistcoat, of gold, blue, purple, scarlet, and fine linen, bearing on the priest's shoulders two pieces of onyx set in gold each engraved with the names of half the tribes, shewing that the high priest represented the entire nation. The breastplate, a nine inch square of linen, upon which shone twelve different gems each engraved with the names of one of the tribes. Aaron thus bearing his nation on his heart." Peloubets Select Notes.

21. **Whose heart stirred him up—his spirit made willing**.—One has said, "I am saved by faith but love impels me to work." Thus love and zeal are always a part of true worship.

22. **Bracelets, earrings, and rings and tablets, all jewels of gold**.—These gifts were no doubt given to the Israelites by the Egyptians and are now placed at the disposal of Moses for use in the tabernacle. Can a maid forget her ornaments? "Thus far they forgot them, that they preferred the beautifying of the sanctuary to their own adorning." Rev. Matthew Henry.

29. **The children of Israel brought a willing offering unto the Lord**.—Emphasis is laid on the fact that their offerings were voluntary or willing. Emphasis is always laid on man's free moral agency whether he be a believer or not. There could be no reward where there is no freedom of the will, and where there is no reward there is no occasion for judgment.

QUESTIONS AND THEMES FOR DISCUSSION

1. (a) Whom did God call to minister as priests? ((b) Every man is a priest at his own family altar.
2. "The tabernacle was to be the national sanctuary, holy, dedicated to the worship of the Lord, the place where God would dwell in a peculiar sense. The most sacred part of it

(Continued on Page 8)